Chirp from the chair

Alexis Grewan

#ChairsChat

Dear members

I wasn't sure how to use this cover letter to maximum effect but quickly realised we have enough from our members that I needn't feel pressured to add too much more!

Much has happened since the May *PEGboard* issue. We managed a successful online AGM for the first time and have seen a number of new developments coming to the fore. In no particular order, the PEG Accreditation Scheme was adopted, a website upgrade has been implemented and PEG is POPI compliant.

Our Exco has expanded with a new role for website coordination and a reinstated role for marketing and communications. We can look forward to ongoing engagement across all areas of our membership but hope to expand on the initiative of the Eastern Cape to build regional engagement. The Mentoring Scheme continues to function at a steady pace with a core group of mentors and a regular flow of completed mentorships.

Our PEG guides are now available in electronic format, which makes our resources accessible to a broader group. We are expanding external liaison with affiliated organisations and are enthusiastic about beginning preparations for PEG's 30th anniversary conference in 2023.

PEGboard is one of our platforms that contributes to building editing knowledge and skills, updating members on current developments and inviting participation from a broad range of members. I encourage you to read with enthusiasm and consider with diligence what role you'd like to play in your own journey as an editor. There is something for everyone – enjoy the education and edification, consider volunteering when the opportunity arises, write an article or tell us about yourself.

On behalf of Exco, I wish you all a happy read.

This issue of *PEGboard* contains an interesting mix of articles that highlight the range of work in which our professional members are engaged.

You will find academic, technical and legal articles, blogs, book reviews and interesting information about the recent and forthcoming activities of PEG, including the results of the AGM, our newly Accredited Text Editors (ATEs), our mentors and our webinar programme.

My thanks go especially to the ATEs for editing and proofreading the contents of this issue.

Members are encouraged to submit articles of interest to our vibrant and growing profession.

Enjoy your reading!

Jacqui Baumgardt

CONTENTS

Don't use a big word when a singularly unloquacious and diminutive linguistic expression will satisfactorily accomplish the contemporary necessity.

Source: https://twitter.com/David L Allen

#TheNewCommittee

AGM results

The following members were voted into office at the AGM on 29 May 2021.

Chairperson
Alexis Grewan

Secretary
Sally Hofmeyr

Accreditation scheme coordinator
John Linnegar

Marketing and communication coordinator
Anna Herrington

Website coordinator
Elize Cookson

Publications coordinator
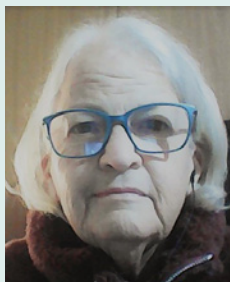Alison Downie

Treasurer
Ruth Coetzee

Mentoring scheme coordinator
Reinoud Boers

E-group coordinator
Kim Rasmussen

Western Cape representative
Cathy Robertson

KwaZulu-Natal representative
Jacqui Baumgardt

Member-at-large
Khomotso Leshaba

PEGboard

PEG administration, website support and e-group coordination

Administrator
Ellyn Barry | administrator@editors.org.za

Executive Committee

Chairperson
Alexis Grewan | alexisgrewan@gmail.com

Secretary
Sally Hofmeyr | sally.hofmeyr@gmail.com

E-group and website coordinator
Kim Rasmussen | tzar42@gmail.com

Treasurer
Ruth Coetzee | treasurer@editors.org.za

Mentoring scheme coordinator
Reinoud Boers | mentoring@editors.org.za

Accreditation scheme coordinator
John Linnegar | johndlinnegar@gmail.com

Marketing and communications coordinator
Anna Herrington | anna@workingwithwords.co.za

Branch representative: KwaZulu-Natal
Jacqui Baumgardt | jaybee@telkomsa.net

Branch representative: Western Cape
Cathy Robertson | cathy@tcrobertson.co.za

Branch representative: Gauteng
Vacant

Member-at-large
Khomotso Leshaba | leshabakhomotso@gmail.com

Publications coordinator
Alison Downie | sticklersinc@gmail.com

For other portfolios of the Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape branches, visit our website at www.editors.org.za.

Third quarter 2021	**Title:** Proofreading on PDFs in Adobe Acrobat documents (second repeat – by popular demand!) Date: Thursday, 9 September 2021, 13:30–17:00 Presenter: Laetitia Sullivan Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand
	Title: *STET!* A fun game – and sundowners – with Dreyer's English Grammar! Date: Thursday, 16 September 2021, 16:00–18:30 Presenters: Myf Steynberg and Khomotso Leshaba Watch this space …
Fourth quarter 2021	**Title:** Editing documents created with LaTeX Date: Thursday, 14 October 2021, 09:30–13:00 Presenter: Kenneth Quek, Finland Documents to be emailed to registrants beforehand
	Title: Want to be an indexer? Well, come and experience the basics Date: Saturday, 23 October 2021, 09:30–13:00 Presenter: Tanya Barben Reading and exercise to be emailed to registrants beforehand
	Title: So you fancy yourself as a copywriter, do you? Come and learn what it takes … Date: Thursday, 4 November 2021, 13:30–17:00 Presenter: TBA Documents to be emailed to registrants beforehand
	Title: Applying Plain Language principles when editing texts Date: Saturday, 13 November 2021, 09:30–13:00 Presenter: John Linnegar Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand
	Title: Editing fiction: An introduction to the craft and to PEG's new guide Date: Saturday, 27 November 2021, 09:30–13:00 Presenter: TBA Documents to be emailed to registrants beforehand

NOTE: The dates and times of the webinars in this programme are subject to change at short notice or, where necessary, without notice. Also, if the number of registrants is less than 15 as at two business days before a scheduled webinar, the webinar could be either postponed or cancelled.

#BookReview

The meaning of the library: A cultural history

(Princeton University Press; ISBN-13: 978-0-691-16639-1;
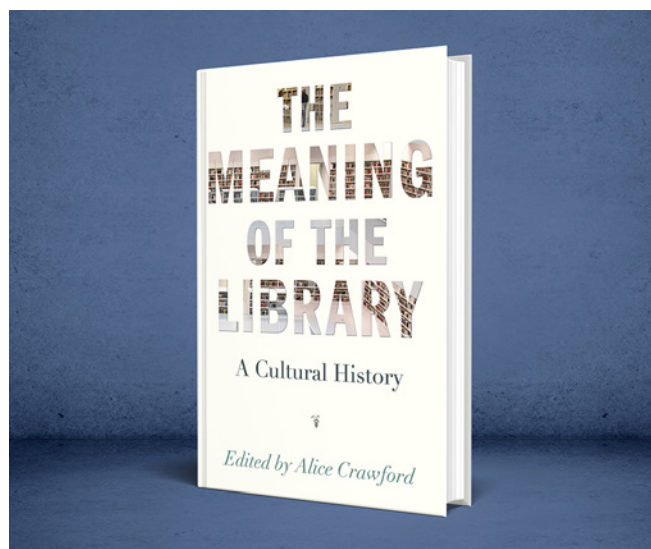ISBN-10: 0-691-16639-0) Edited by **Alice Crawford**

Lois Henderson

No matter whether you are a library user or a library professional, you are bound to find something that satisfies your curiosity, or that piques your interest, in Alice Crawford's collection of essays entitled *The meaning of the library: A cultural history*.

Spanning a wide range of topics to do with libraries, the book is separated into three parts: 'The library through time', 'The library in imagination' and 'The library now and in the future'. Being both a librarian by profession and a cultural historian of sorts (by dint of having studied the Cultural History of Western Europe for three years at undergraduate level), I chose to hone in on 'The Library in Imagination' and I was definitely not disappointed.

The wide grasp of the subject, and the depth of the insights, was astounding. From Marina Warner's acknowledgement of the seminal value of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, through Robert Crawford's exploration of the librarian as ennobled and immortalised in poetry (and I can think of a number of librarians who would love to be so remembered), to Laura Marcus's pursuit of the images of the haunted library and the library as a labyrinth (with special focus, much to my delight, being given to the library as presented in all its convolutions and medieval ramifications in *The name of the rose*), the authors never fail to intrigue and enlighten. Not only are the contributors all experts in their fields, but they are also such excellent writers that one can truly savour each word and sentence they wrote.

Their rhapsodical descriptions embody the mystery that lies at the core of the library as a phenomenon stretching down through the ages. For instance, Warner draws attention to the 'way of making [that] is important with regard to the library in fiction, viewed not only as a particular place where single titles or book-objects have been collected, but as a metaphor for literature itself, a polyphony of voices, laid down on multiple tracks, looping and converging over time, sometimes over great vistas of time'. In short, the richness and wealth of information that is embodied in library collections have brought only honour and memorableness to this text.

Whoever thought of a library as being a prosaic and stuffy old place that bears little relevance to the current digital age must definitely think again. Rounding off the work with an acknowledgement of the significance of libraries even in the modern day and age, given by the Library of Congress (James H. Billington), tribute is paid to the role of the library as a purveyor of knowledge that is geared towards satisfying people's ongoing search for the truth: '*The meaning of the library: A cultural history* is a riveting and deeply satisfying work that is bound to leave the reader not only far more aware of the sociocultural importance of the institution as a reservoir of heritage and learning, but also inspired to think of issues that lie beyond the earthly and temporal realm' (Princeton University Press 2021).

Reference

Princeton University Press 2021 https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691166391/the-meaning-of-the-library

Words commonly confused, misused and abused – Part 2 of 3

Lyn Aecer

Many writers nowadays are part of those 'lost generations' who were taught no formal grammar at school or who have a command of English only as a foreign or a second language. So it should come as no surprise that confusion about the meaning of words and the choice of the incorrect word or expression is common in many of the texts we are called upon to improve. Sadly, such lists of commonly confused words and expressions tend not to be freely available, nor do those there are cover all commonly confused words.

Here, then, are some of the commonest, arranged from L to P. These letters follow on from A to J featured in Part 1 in the May 2021 issue of *PEGboard.* The letters R to Y will be published as Part 3 in a future issue of the newsletter.

latter vs last

Latter may be used only when there are two items or options, a *former* and a *latter*. In a list of three or more items, the final one is the *last*, not the *latter*.

- ✗ … few participants, only one or few tasks, only one interpreting direction and, notably, only one language pair. In view of the apparently large effect of specific languages, the *latter* is a major limitation. (*last*)

leaders vs leadership

Leaders are individuals who lead or command a group, an organisation or a country. *Leadership* is the attribute or quality of leading.

- ✓ *Leadership* is seriously lacking in our enterprise: we don't have a strong executive we can look up to.
- ✗ The *leadership* of the organisation are currently attending a strategic bosberaad or lekgotla. (*leaders*)
- ✗ The issue of constitutional demands for gender equality forced the production of a reformist Muslim family-law proposal that caused deep division among the Muslim religious *leadership*. (*leaders*)
- ✓ It is the duty of these communities, and those in *leadership* roles in them, to ensure that the oppression of women does not continue in the name of religion.

less vs fewer

In the words of Robert Allen (2005: 268), the choice between *less* and *fewer* is one of the great usage trouble spots of modern times. *Less* as a comparative adjective is the opposite of 'greater' and 'more'; it is used of quantity and size, not of numbers. Just as *fewer* is always used with a plural noun and indicates number (*fewer* cars, people), so *less* is nearly always used with a singular noun and indicates amount (*less* food, trouble).

- ✓ This solution is *less* problematic than any others.
- ✗ There were *less* protesters participating in the march than we had expected. (*fewer*)

However, when the noun denotes an amount rather than a numerical quantity, even if it is in the plural, *less* is the more natural choice:

- ✓ We have *less* than three miles to go.
- ✓ Candidates are invited to write fifty words or *less* on a topic of their choice.

Sometimes, when *less* is followed by a noun with an intervening adjective, ambiguity can result:

- ? *Less* rigid helmets were available for visitors to the site.

Here, if *less* is meant to refer to 'helmets', not 'rigid', then it should be replaced by *fewer* (Allen 2005: 268).

likely vs probably, possibly

In American English, *likely* is used without a modifier as the equivalent of *probably* in constructions such as 'We'll *likely* be on time' and 'They will *likely* require additional supplies'. However, in British and South African English, the preferred usage is *probably* or *possibly*, unless *likely* is preceded by a modifier such as 'very', 'most' or 'quite': 'We will most *likely* be late.' 'It is very *likely* that she will be re-elected.'

- ✗ The outcome will *likely* be the dismissal of the minister. (*probably*, *possibly*)
- ✓ The outcome of the election is *probably* a foregone conclusion.

loose vs lose

Loose is the opposite of 'tight'. To *lose* something is to no longer have possession of it.

- ✗ We must not *loose* sight of the fact that he is the founder of the company. (*lose*)

members vs membership

As in the earlier *leaders* vs *leadership* example, *members* are individuals who make up a group or an association. Each has *membership* of that group or association, that is, the body of *members*. *Membership* is the condition or status of a member of a society or an organised body.

meter vs metre

Meter refers to a device that measures (eg a water meter, an altimeter) or the metrical measure in a line of verse (eg iambic pentameter). *Metre* is the base unit of length in the metric system. These spellings should not be used interchangeably. ❯

motivate vs justify

Motivate means 'to present facts and arguments in support of a proposal or a request'. *Justify* means 'to prove to be right or reasonable'; 'to prove to be a good reason for something'; or 'to excuse, exonerate'.

- ✓ We will need you to *motivate* your request for extended leave before we can grant it.
- ✓ Unless you can *justify* your additional expenditure of R1 000, we will be able to reimburse you only the amount of R350 originally budgeted for.

number vs amount

If you can count them, use *number*; if you can't, use *amount*. That is, use *number* with nouns that have plurals; use *amount* with nouns that have no plural.

- ✓ Any *number* of solutions are possible here.
- ✓ He piled a large *amount* of potato chips onto his plate.
- ✗ The *amount* of learners who are glued to their cellphones at school is astounding. (*number*)

outset vs onset

Outset means 'the start or beginning'; it is usually the headword in a prepositional phrase such as 'at the *outset*' or 'from the *outset*'. *Onset* means 'the start or beginning of something, especially something unpleasant'.

- ✗ At the *onset*, note that the concept of punishment is not exclusive to law, let alone criminal law. (*outset*)
- ✓ The *onset* of COVID-19 changed our lives radically.
- ✓ From the *outset*, relationships have not been entirely satisfactory.

partake (in, of) vs participate

We *partake in*, ie 'share in' or 'take a share of' an activity, or *partake of* (eat or drink), but we *participate in* something. The two words are not synonymous. *Partake* tends to be a formal usage.

- ✓ The staff members *participated* freely in the discussions. But some members decided not to *partake in* the ensuing debate.
- ✓ Would you like to *partake of* lunch with us?

past or last

Last is often confused with *past*. *Last* means 'final', 'in the end', or 'coming after all others'. *Past* means 'up to the present' or 'recently elapsed'.

- ✓ For the *past* decade, Edith's health has been really good, but it has recently begun to decline.
- ✓ For the *last* decade of his life, Marcel lived comfortably.

possibility vs opportunity

These two words are often used interchangeably, but incorrectly so. A *possibility* is either 'a thing that is possible' or 'a state or fact of being possible'. An *opportunity* is 'a favourable time or set of circumstances for doing something'.

- ✓ The *possibility* of the president visiting our community arose.
- ✓ The president's coming to visit our community presented a great *opportunity* for us to thank him for his reforms.
- ✗ I value having the *possibility* to attend an audition. (*opportunity*)
- ✗ The interpreter consequently creates a *possibility* for understanding what is happening. (*an opportunity*)

potential/potentially vs possible/possibly, probable/probably

The much-abused and -misused word *potential* means mainly 'underlying' or 'latent'. It should not be confused with *possible* or *probable*.

- ✓ Examples from Spain and Belgium remind us of the *potential* dangers.

- ✓ A *potential* statesman is one who has the latent ability; all he needs is the *opportunity*.
- ✗ Apart from avoidance and emergency management, a *potential* option for the PFSs is desensitisation to the pollen. (*possible*)
- ✗ The interpreter strives to achieve a common ground and prevent *potential* interactional problems. (*possible*, *probable*)
- ✗ Students' word choices in their narratives *potentially* suggest that they may feel more secure about their brokering skills. (*probably*, *possibly*)
- ✗ There are many *potential* remedies for all of these causes. (*possible*)

presently vs currently

Presently means 'soon', as in 'I'll join you *presently*'. To avoid any ambiguity of meaning, use 'at present' or 'currently' to mean 'now'.

- ? She is *presently* coming home from Thailand. (Does the writer mean 'now' or 'soon/shortly'?)
- ✗ There are *presently* too many homeless people without shelter in our city. (*currently*, *at present*)

principal vs principle

Principle is only ever a noun; it means 'a fundamental truth or proposition as the foundation for belief or action'. *Principal* can be either a noun, meaning 'head of a school or a college', 'leading performer' or 'capital sum of money', or an adjective, meaning 'main' or 'chief' (Treble & Vallins 1973: 148).

- ✓ In *principle*, I will support his objection to the environmentally unsound development.
- ✓ My *principal* objection to his proposal is that it is discriminatory.
- ✗ He is the *principle* of a private college. (*principal*)
- ✗ The fact that the housing density in our neighbourhood will be intensified makes us object to the development in *principal*. (*principle*)

prior vs previous(ly)

Prior is an adjective meaning 'existing or coming before in time, order or sequence'. *Previously* is an adverb meaning 'existing or occurring before in time or order'. Each is used in a particular way.

- ✓ The accused has no *prior* convictions.
- ✗ … a witness who testifies to events that occurred 10 months *prior*. (*previously*)
- ✗ He experienced a single episode of allergy suggestive of MSG syndrome after a Chinese meal 15 years *prior*. (*previously* or *previous to that*)

In this next example, *prior* and *to* form a unit that functions as a preposition (meaning *before*):

- ✓ *Prior to* his working in a government department, he was a teacher.

I hope you'll find this three-part list of common confusables to be a useful vade mecum as you go about improving authors' words. ✒

References

Allen, R 2005 *How to write better English*. London: Penguin.
Einsohn, A & Schwartz, M 2019 (4th ed) *The copyeditor's handbook: A guide for book publishing and corporate communications*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Garner, BA 2016 *Garner's modern English usage*. Published online: OUP. DOI: 10.1093/acref/9780190491482.001.0001
Kahn, J (ed) 1985 *The right word at the right time*. London: Reader's Digest.
Linnegar, J 2013 *Engleish, our Engleish: Common errors in South African English and how to resolve them*. Cape Town: Pharos.
Oxford South African concise dictionary 2010 (2nd ed) Cape Town: OUP.
Partridge, E 1999 *Usage and abusage*. London: Penguin.
Shorter Oxford English dictionary 2007 (6th ed) Oxford: OUP.
Treble, HA & Vallins, GH 1973 *An ABC of English usage*. London: OUP.

Meet the PEG mentors

Alexis Grewan and Reinoud Boers

More than 30 PEG members have enjoyed the benefits of the PEG Mentoring Scheme under the mentorship of our current panel of mentors.

The May 2021 issue of *PEGboard* introduced the mentees who completed their mentorships successfully in 2020, but without the willingness and commitment of our mentors, there would be no mentoring scheme. In this issue, we would like to shine the spotlight on our PEG mentors to acknowledge their role in continuing professional development and maintaining and improving editing standards. We salute their valuable contribution to editing as a profession.

We asked our mentors a number of questions about their mentoring experiences. Their shared responses are summarised below, before we reveal a little about each mentor more personally.

How did you become a copy editor?
Many of our mentors entered the editing profession as a transition from careers in teaching, translation, academic lecturing or linguistics, while others acquired their skills on the job or developed proficiency after securing work in the publishing sector. We have mentors with language degrees for whom entry into the editing profession was a natural progression, and we have mentors who performed writing and editing tasks in the business sector and moved into freelance editing.

What do you particularly enjoy about mentoring?
Our mentors unanimously agreed that they enjoy being a part of developing skills and knowledge related to editing. They appreciate observing the growth and increasing the confidence of mentees by sharing knowledge and building collegial relationships. An interesting fact is that our mentors also enjoy learning from mentees, and they see the mentorship as a mutually beneficial interaction.

What do you find challenging about being a mentor?
Our mentors are busy people with heavy workloads and many other responsibilities. Their biggest challenge as mentors is managing their time. However, the flexibility of the mentoring programme accommodates changes in their schedules and generally does not impede mentees from completing their mentorships successfully and on time.

Some mentors noted that there is a fine balance between teaching and mentoring. One also has to be sensitive to the needs of the mentee and be open to different styles of editing.

The responsibility of mentoring can be daunting but is outweighed by the rewards.

Why would you encourage PEG members to be mentored?
Mentoring is a type of on-the-job training that can fill the gaps not covered by editing courses. It also makes up for the void resulting from a lack of in-service training opportunities. For newcomers, it is an introduction to the practical editing process, and for experienced editors it is an opportunity to hone specific editing skills. Mentoring brings to light the learning needs of a copy editor and addresses them through one-on-one interaction. Anyone who feels uncertain in their work as a copy editor can be sure that a mentorship will develop confidence. The mentoring process, which consists of exercises, feedback and practice, encourages critical thinking in a safe environment that allows learning to take place, questions to be answered, learning through mistakes, and growth.

Why would you encourage PEG members to become mentors?
PEG members with an established level of skills and experience play a significant role in preserving the status of the editing profession. Mentors are not only able to give back to others by sharing their knowledge and expertise, but they also gain insight from the fresh perspectives brought about by mentees. The transfer of skills benefits the entire editing community, while mentors offer a critical opportunity for 'in-house training'. Our mentors also asserted that experienced editors have a responsibility to share their knowledge and skills with new members of the profession. Mentoring is a satisfying experience overall.

Introducing our PEG mentors
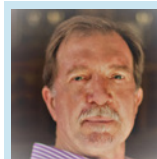
John Linnegar needs no introduction and is one of PEG's greatest assets. He has mentored a record-breaking 10 PEG members and received the Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award for 2016.
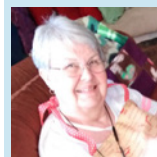
Hester von Wielligh became a member of PEG around 2007. She has been mentoring since 2013 and is attending to her eighth mentorship. She was awarded the Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award for 2017. Hester offers mentoring in both English and Afrikaans and has two Afrikaans mentorships to her credit. She is self-employed as an editor, while also offering translation ❯

services between Afrikaans and English. She is working towards accreditation as a sworn translator under the South African Translation Institute (SATI). Hester described mentoring as enriching, an experience from which she continues to learn and grow.

Inga Norenius joined PEG in about 2011 and has been a PEG mentor since 2012. She is in the process of mentoring her sixth mentee. Inga was awarded the Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award for 2014. She is a freelancer and provides a variety of editing, proofreading and project management services, mainly in the scholarly publishing sector. Inga experiences mentoring as rewarding and stimulating.

Lia Marus has been a PEG member since 2005 and has mentored since 2016. She is in the process of mentoring her fifth PEG member. Lia owns an editing and writing consultancy and focuses on academic editing and marketing materials. Lia takes pride in moulding the next generation of copy editors, from both a technical language perspective and a business point of view.

Liz Sparg has been a PEG member since 2010 and has been mentoring since 2011. She has mentored five PEG members. Liz is a freelance editor and offers a wide range of editing services, including academic, NGO-based, educational (from Grade 1 to tertiary) and fiction editing. Her niche remains school textbooks, specifically English First Additional Language publications. She believes the correct match between mentor and mentee supports effective mentorships.

Cathy Robertson joined PEG in 2015 and has been mentoring since 2018. She has mentored five PEG members. Cathy wears various hats: she is an academic editor, an editorial manager of a journal, and is responsible for the Department of Higher Education's national report. She was awarded the Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award for 2020. Cathy appreciates the relationships she develops with her mentees; these will serve her ongoing collegial needs well into the future.
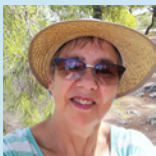
Karin Pampallis joined PEG in 2010 and became a mentor in 2016. Karin is engaged in her fourth mentorship. She is a freelance editor and has project-managed a number of books and book series, in the process learning a lot about the publishing business. She has enjoyed the mutual benefit of the mentoring process in which sharing knowledge and skills has helped to clarify her own understanding.

Melissa Davidson became a PEG member in 2011 and undertook her first mentorship in 2020. Melissa's work involves writing and editing copy for business clients as a freelancer. She also offers academic editing services. Melissa particularly enjoys the collaborative nature of the mentoring process that arises from the sharing of ideas, resources and information.
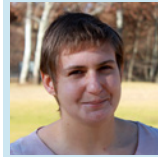
Menitza Botha is our first mentor to achieve Accredited Text Editor status. She joined PEG in 2019 and has mentored one PEG member to date, with a second underway. Menitza is a freelance editor and translator, specialising in academic editing in English and Afrikaans. She offers mentoring in Afrikaans in addition to English. She enjoys knowing that she can learn as much from mentees as they can from her.

Acknowledging our former mentors

- Irene Stotko – first Gauteng mentoring coordinator – Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award 2012
- Jill Bishop – 4 mentorships – Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award 2015
- Reinoud Boers – 6 mentorships – Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award 2014
- Jenny de Wet – 5 mentorships
- Andy Grewar – 1 mentorship – Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award 2013
- Sue Randall – 1 mentorship
- Sharon Montgomery – 1 mentorship
- Alex Potter – 4 mentorships
- Audrey Williams – 4 mentorships
- Nicky de Bene – 3 mentorships
- Tony Lavine – 2 mentorships
- Judith Marsden – 1 mentorship
- Eleanor-Mary Cadell – 2 mentorships
- Kristina Davidson – 1 mentorship
- Janneke Engelbrecht – 1 mentorship
- Natasha Ravyse – 5 mentorships
- Christien Terblanche – 4 mentorships

If you are interested in being mentored, please visit: https://www.editors.org.za/Mentoring.aspx.
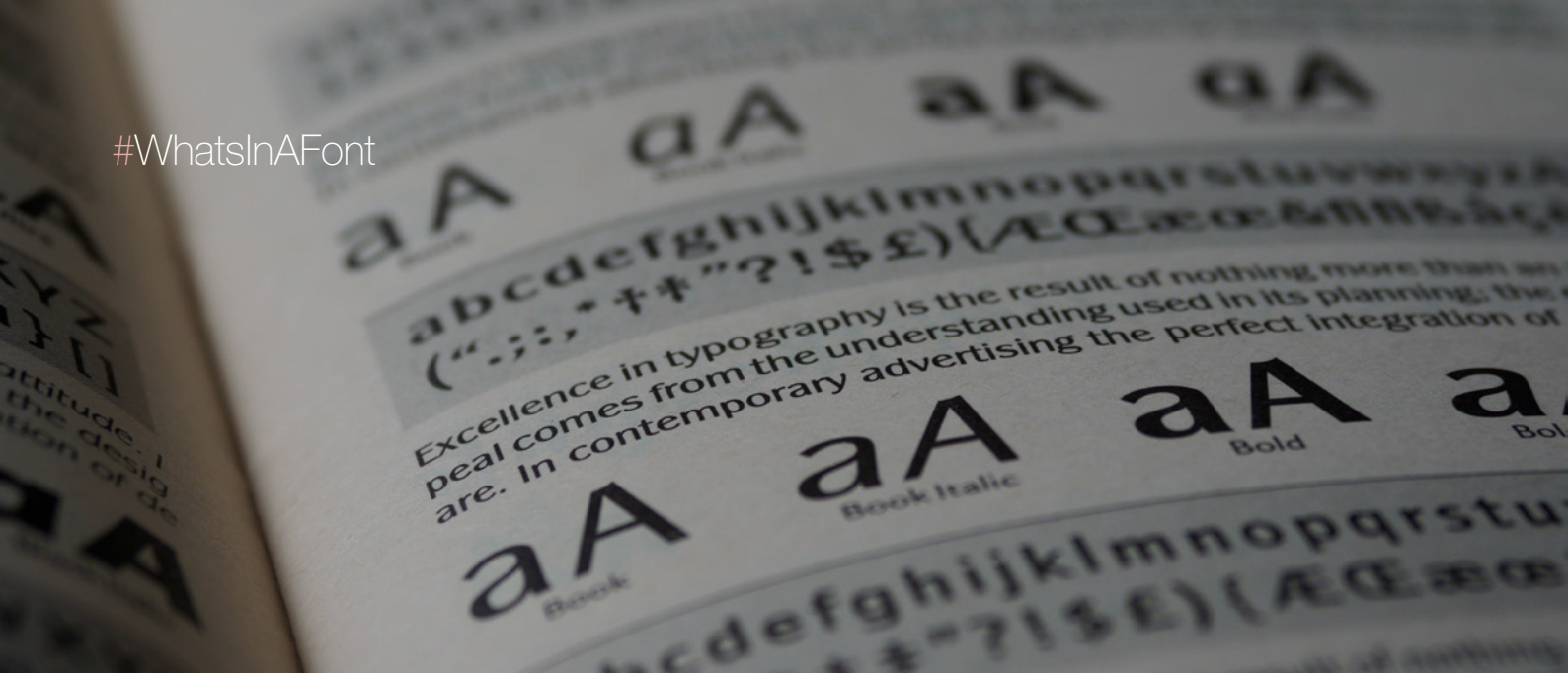
Having a frothy about fonts

Ken McGillivray

Fonts – long ago spelt 'faunts' – can arouse strong feelings in some people, whereas others will simply be unaware of them or their potential impact. Think of a play or a film: How many of us can say that we even notice the lighting of a theatre production or a film's soundtrack? But imagine the kerfuffle if either were badly presented or missing entirely. Mostly, these elements are unsung, but they enrich the overall ambience – and without them the complaints would be loud and instantaneous. However, those of us who have to wade daily through turgid texts are bound to have an intense opinion on the merits of a well-designed font.

According to the *Oxford South African Concise Dictionary*, the word 'font' originates from the 16th-century French *fonte*, from *fonde*, meaning to melt – totally appropriate because typefaces were hot-cast from lead. A font is a particular size, weight and style of typeface, usually produced in a range sharing the same style or 'family'. Each piece – called a 'sort' – represents an individual glyph. 'In typography, a glyph is an elemental symbol within an agreed set of symbols, intended to represent a readable character for the purposes of writing. Glyphs are considered to be unique marks that collectively add up to the spelling of a word …' (Wikipedia).

Those of us who are ancient enough to have set text by manually composing lead type remember with nostalgia the days when, among other beauties, one could *sans drame* request a ligature, a hairline space or even, heaven forbid, small caps, without being certified criminally insane by a wet-behind-the-ears, computer-spawned typesetter.

The terms 'lower case' and 'upper case' originate from the way in which the individual letters were stored: capital and small letters being stored in separate trays, with the capitals being in the top or 'upper' tray. This led to the lest-we-forget widespread 1960s-plus craze for 'printer's tray' displays as typesetters began to dispose of these containers (and those thousands of bits of lead type) when switching to electronic or 'hot' typesetting. (Among the overabundance of those available, 'genuine' printer's trays were achieving top dollar!)

The early years of the last century saw widespread experimentation with typefaces and book production as a whole, especially in France. Imagine, like Joyce, Apollinaire or Cocteau, giving birth to your literary gem and having a special font designed for it to be set in and, finally, having the likes of Pierre Legrain or Rose Adler carry out the precious binding (Peyré & Fletcher 2004). Ah, what bibliophilic and typographic heaven!

As with politics, I find that one's font leanings tend to mature with age. I must admit to an early, almost indecent obsession in my youth with American Typewriter – wonderful for headings, magic if metallically embossed and absolutely the last word in chic for signage, but totally impractical for almost any text, especially in its lighter weights.

The 1960s was perhaps the heyday of Univers, with perhaps a slight sidebar to Helvetica. This was the age of Brutalism when raw in-your-face was *it*. For the mod and rocker types, however, even Univers didn't go nearly far enough and anybody aiming to be somebody in the 3D-design field would probably resort to using metal letter stencils *à la* Le Corbusier instead. They were a bit problematic if used on anything but a smooth surface, but, what the hell, the gritty industrial feel went perfectly with off-the-shutter concrete.

Ah, what bibliophilic and typographic heaven!

Whatever, Sans Serif was *the* thing; Gill Sans was a little too esoteric and highbrow for most, so Univers in all its forms became – well – universal. One inevitable backlash to this typographic regime of austerity arose in the form of an ill-advised, but fortunately short-lived, revival of such styles as Gothic and Art Nouveau. These typefaces were clothed in the euphoria of flower power and post-Woodstock hippiedom and were a teensy bit twee, it must be said, in the Machine Age. Magical masters such as Mucha, Horta and Guimard et al. were, after all, far too brilliant to be emulated successfully by everyone. When less finally became not more but positively boring, Postmodernism took a more pragmatic view. It borrowed unashamedly from the entire 20th-century design portfolio, with, it must be admitted, some interesting results – particularly in the direction of Art Deco.

However, our 21st-century world has now spawned a new pandemic – Typovirus-21. Nowadays, in this digital world, almost every Tom, Susan and They can create their own fonts. This has let loose a veritable gourmand's smörgasbord free-for-all. And to think that at the beginning of the 2000s, the American newspaper publishing industry had the gall to attempt to eradicate the use of poor maligned Comic Sans! ❯

In those halcyon pre-Microsoft Word days, one option for us *voorlopers* flaunting a font fetish was to indulge in the kaleidoscope of Letraset (never ever enough bloody e's!). Once, for my sins – or my insanity – I set the entire order of service for a wedding (including hymns) using Letraset – sad to say, the marriage didn't last. But I don't think it would be entirely fair to ascribe blame to the schmaltzy typeface I used.

We must bear in mind, however, that certain fonts or styles of font can send branding signals – subtle or not – in the way of McLuhan's 'the medium is the message' (1964):

> Your words are important and the typeface is their delivery mechanism. We live, as we are often reminded, in an attention economy. You need to hold those eyes, so in most contexts you will want something fresh and readable without being lightweight, something businesslike without being forbidding (Leith 2015).

Author Simon Garfield is even convinced that Barack Obama's presidential campaign was materially helped by the fact that all his election posters were set in Gotham as '[t]here are some types that read as if everything written in them is honest, or at least fair' (Garfield 2010: 24).

Your first impression may be created by your choice of font, even though most times you will have no way of knowing what the receiver's reaction may be. However, particularly if you are experimenting when emailing, it may be wise to test a few examples prior to pressing the Send button: Heaven forbid you should need to shout in CAPS, and 'take with a pinch of salt the advice that fortune tends to favour the **bold**' (Leith 2015).

Nowadays, whereas something Sans Serif might be seen to express modernity, the use of Times New Roman might convey a line-in-the-sand traditionalist stance. For example, a latte-sipping yuppie will possibly choose trendy Eurostile, a budding bat mitzvah party coordinator might embrace Zapfino – or worse – whereas a dyed-in-the-wool academic might stay grounded anywhere in the safe realm of Serifs. Each to their own, but, hey, what would an old-school, heavy-metal band be without its Gothic Black logo?

While on the subject of subtle or businesslike branding signals expressed via fonts, I once received an unsolicited CV heralded by 'Hi'. I must admit, against my better judgement, this *outré* opening did entice further reading. My sensibilities were, however, immediately assaulted by a selection of not two but

three different fonts – a toxic mix far too awful to detail here. This almost succeeded in blinding me to the said CV's more interesting grammatical experimentation, which added nothing to its appeal. You don't need to have studied feng shui to realise that this wasn't going to work: wrong message sent to the wrong receiver – in the wrong fonts, *nogal. Eish …*

A selection of not two but three different fonts – a toxic mix …

As one settles into sedate later life, the smooth flow and easy readability of Serif fonts become more comforting, at least for me – naturally, further embellished by fully justified text. (We oldies do have a strange ability to read a full column-width of text without a problem.) We have a new crisis, however, as the whole electronic *thang* threatens Serif fonts. If they would only sort out those pesky pixels! The death of the Serif font – a traditional usage dating back to 1465 – is unthinkable and certainly worthy of a class action. All this said, it appears that we are now mainly reduced to a safe, middle-of-the-road Arial existence – boring!

Apart from the whole font question, another monster is raising its head: layout. The justified versus unjustified text lobbies aside, there is the spreading abomination of starting new paragraphs with neither preceding line spacing nor first-line indentation.

But that's a whole other whinge …! 🍃

References

Garfield, S 2010 *Just my type: A book about fonts*. London: Profile Books.
Leith, S 2015 'Why your choice of font can send a subliminal message' *Financial Times*, 12 May 2015.
McLuhan, M 1964 *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Peyré, Y & Fletcher, HG 2004 *Art Deco bookbindings: The work of Pierre Legrain and Rose Adler*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press/The New York Public Library.
The Dictionary Unit for South African English (eds) 2010 *Oxford South African concise dictionary* (2nd ed). Cape Town: OUP.

#MasterClass

PEG webinars

Ricky Woods

When I became an associate member of PEG in 2017, I was immediately taken by the range of workshop training opportunities on offer.

Alas! They were usually only available in Johannesburg or Cape Town, or sometimes in Durban. Living as I do in Port Elizabeth (or should I say Gqeberha), attending would have meant a road trip or a flight, plus accommodation. Needless to say, on a teacher's income, I was unable to attend.

Then a few months before lockdown came an array of wonderful opportunities to attend webinars hosted by some of our most experienced, talented and generous members. As a member of PEG, it also meant that the costs of these three- to four-hour training sessions were greatly reduced.

I recently had cause to draw up a list of the webinars I have attended since lockdown and was astonished to realise that there were more than 20!

The added bonus is that, upon completion of each course, participants are sent a recording of the webinar that can be used at their leisure to go over things that might not have been clear or to refresh their memory about certain points.

PRICELESS

When I think of the value added to my life by these webinars, I am reminded of the old MasterCard advertisements, which in this case might have ended with: 'Education? Priceless'. 🍃

What the POPI Act means for us as editors

Alexis Grewan

You'll recall from the January 2021 issue of *PEGboard* that compliance with the POPI Act, 2013 (Protection of Personal Information) (Act No. 4 of 2013) was needed by 30 June 2020. The Information Regulator granted a one-year grace period for organisations to meet the compliance requirements of the Act. The grace period expired on 30 June 2021 and all clauses of the Act are now active.

The POPI Act, or POPIA, protects people from harm, such as identity theft and discrimination. Non-compliance on the part of responsible parties could lead to penalties. Responsible parties include organisations such as PEG and independent service providers.

Key terms

Personal information

Personal information refers to any information about a person and includes their contact details, demographic information, personal history, biometric information, opinions about the person, and personal correspondence.

Processing of personal information

Processing of information means collecting, using, storing, disseminating, modifying or destroying information. If you process personal information, you need to take the correct measures to become compliant. This applies to PEG as an organisation but not necessarily to you as an editor.

PEG and POPIA

PEG has consulted a data governance expert because we are an organisation that processes the personal information of our members. PEG now has the following measures in place:

- A Data Privacy Policy (for internal management)
- A Privacy Statement (for the website)
- Readiness guidelines for the appointed information officer
- A readiness checklist for our members as a resource on our website
- A data breach response procedure.

Editors and POPIA

A word on the Information Regulator

There has been some confusion about the need to register appointed information officers with the Information Regulator. As editors offering services in our individual capacity, we do not need to register with the Information Regulator. If you are a small business or microenterprise that processes personal information of clients in order to execute your services (for example, sharing work with business partners, marketing your services or sending out newsletters), you need to be POPI compliant. The onus is on you as the business owner to appoint an information officer who must register with the Information Regulator. All other requirements

must then also be adhered to. You can read more about this here: https://www.justice.gov.za/inforeg/portal.html.

A word on POPIA and being an editor

As editors, we do not process personal information from clients to execute our professional services. In other words, we do not need to collect, use, disseminate, modify or destroy personal information to offer an editing service. If you answer the questions 'why do I need personal information?' and 'what will I use it for?', this becomes clear. Mostly, we use personal information for communication. For this reason, we do not need to register with the Information Regulator. (Think about it: everyone with a contact list cannot register with the Information Regulator – that's everyone with an email list, a WhatsApp list and a cellphone contact list!)

As promised at the AGM on 29 May 2021, we obtained guidelines from Ken Chikwanha, data governance expert at Axzel Advisory Services, on what we need to know in our individual capacity as editors. You will find this information on our website too.

The dos and don'ts of dealing with personal information

- **DO** – Be mindful and transparent about what data you are collecting and the purpose for which you are collecting it.
- **DO** – Know what personal data you hold and where it is stored at all times.
- **DO** – Protect client information like it was your own. Regularly change your laptop and email passwords. Keep your hard drives, USBs and hard copies in a secure location.
- **DO** – Dispose of data so that it is unusable even if it ends up in the wrong hands.

- **DON'T** – Share client information without getting the express approval of the owner of the information. Use the BCC feature when sending an email to multiple recipients.
- **DON'T** – Collect client data that you don't need to fulfil the purposes of your relationship.
- **DON'T** – Keep client data for longer than you need to. By doing so, you carry avoidable risk.

A final word

We have a duty to handle personal information responsibly. Data breaches can happen inadvertently and without deliberate intent. The POPI Act presumes we have not put adequate measures in place if they find out about a data breach. This means we must make sure we have the bare minimum in place to protect the personal information of those with whom we work. Our best bet is to make sure there is as little risk as possible that a data breach can occur. The above pointers are a good start to regulating what we do or don't do with the personal information of our clients.

Resources

Information Regulator SA https://www.justice.gov.za/inforeg
PEG website https://editors.org.za

PEG's inaugural group of Accredited Text Editors (English)

John Linnegar

It gives the Executive Committee great pleasure to announce the names of PEG's inaugural group of Accredited Text Editors (English).

We extend our hearty congratulations to you all on this laudable achievement.

The PEG Accreditation Scheme is an attempt to meet two important objectives that help members to maintain their professional service levels – one officially imposed, the other self-regulatory:

- Enabling its members to meet any requirements for accredited language practitioner status set by the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 (SALPC Act) (Act No. 8 of 2014) and the ensuing regulations 'for the training, regulation, accreditation and control of language practitioners so as to set standards …'
- Encouraging members to continue pursuing their continuing professional development (CPD) annually with a view to maintaining their service offering at an acceptable level or attaining Accredited Text Editor (ATE) status.

This scheme in its current form was approved at the Guild's AGM in May 2021. Overall, it forms part of a two-component strategy that includes:

- CPD events and other activities to help members hone their skills regularly with a view to rendering the best professional services possible
- an annual Accreditation Test, the purpose of which is to give recognition to members who are able to display a level of professional competence benchmarked against international best practice. ❯

Michèle Boshoff is based in Pretoria. She has completed 120 parkruns! To remain sane, she loves hiking and reading.

Menitza Botha lives in Sasolburg and admits she is a complete night owl.

Anneke Brand resides in Somerset West. She is an A-grade river paddler who spends far too little time on the water.

Alison Downie is based near Worcester. She has a black belt in karate and confesses she is incapable of working without a box of Darling toffees on her desk.

Alexis Grewan calls Centurion home. She is an astrological twin (Gemini) and an earthling twin (fraternal).

Sally Hofmeyr lives in Cape Town and once had a job as a camera operator in a twin-engine aeroplane doing aerial surveys.

Janita Low (Holtzhausen) resides in Cape Town. She is a volunteer at a Shine Literacy chapter and loves reading to the children.

Carrie Milton, also based in the Fairest Cape, is happiest when hiking or dancing salsa.

Sue Randall lives in Joburg. Her significant other is a white cat with blue eyes, who wobbles when he walks and somersaults when he runs (a condition called cerebellar hypoplasia).

Leatitia Romero is based in Centurion. She is a 1930s homesteader at heart.

Judy Scott-Goldman has her home in Simon's Town. She loves Biodanza – expressive dancing to warm the heart, free the body and soothe the pernickety mind of an uptight editor.

Elene van Sandwyk is based in Taipei, Taiwan. She is a weekend foster mom to babies so that they can experience life outside of a children's home.

As in 2020, this year's test will be conducted onscreen (not online) and candidates will be able to complete it in the comfort of their home or home office. It is an open book test: you may consult any reputable authorities, but not any other person – whether they are a practitioner or not. You will have to list the authorities you consulted and submit those with your completed test script, for the record.

If you are planning to sit the 2021 Accreditation Test, you should please take note of the following arrangements:

Registration opens on Monday, 16 August and closes on 15 September.

Week of sitting the test: 18–25 September 2021 – you choose and agree with the Accreditation Officer the 48-hour period that suits you best during this eight-day period.

Time to complete the test: Strictly 48 hours maximum from the time you receive the emailed test script from the Accreditation Officer. Should you return the test after the 48 hours have expired, you will be disqualified.

Anonymising scripts: It is vitally important that the examiners do not know which member is associated with a script. An important task of the Accreditation Officer is to 'anonymise' the candidates and their scripts by (1) allocating a test number to each candidate and (2) providing the examiners with a list of test numbers that correspond to the numbers on the scripts. You can contribute too by (1) ensuring that only your test number appears on your test script and (2) changing the name associated with Word's Track Changes and Comments functions from your personal identifier to 'XX' or similar. If you need help with this, please ask a friend before the test period or the Accreditation Officer during the test period.

Qualification to take the test: The only qualification to register for and take the test is that you have to have been a PEG member for a minimum of 12 months prior to 16 August 2021. Both Associate and Full Members are entitled to take it.

Test fee: R750,00. This purely covers the costs of administering the test and marking the test scripts.

The test will comprise four sections: Grammar/language, Editing, Proofreading and General topics. (Except for the Grammar section, there will be a choice of questions to answer.) The pass mark per section and overall is 80%. This is in accordance with the pass marks of other societies of editors and proofreaders internationally.

Special health-related circumstances: Should any member have a disability or condition that is likely to require special consideration for them to take the test, they should approach the Accreditation Officer. The examiners will then take the candidate's circumstances into account in order to make it as feasible as possible for them to take the test under optimal conditions.

Marking time and announcement of ATEs: The time allocated to marking of the scripts will be a minimum of three months from the end of September. The successful candidates will be announced in early 2022. The successful ATEs will be able to use the title Accredited Text Editor (English) on their email signatures and marketing materials from 1 March 2022.

Remember that, in order to maintain their status, all ATEs have to (1) retain their PEG membership and (2) complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD events and discretionary editing-related activities per membership year.

All the best with your preparations for the test and for success in the test itself!

Ten (free!) productivity tools for editors – Part 1 of 2

Laetitia Sullivan

Time – something we wish we had more of, yet we all have the same 24 hours per day. So, how to make the best use of them? Hello, productivity tools! These days there is an app or tool for everything, so let's look at some productivity tools that can streamline your work as an editor.
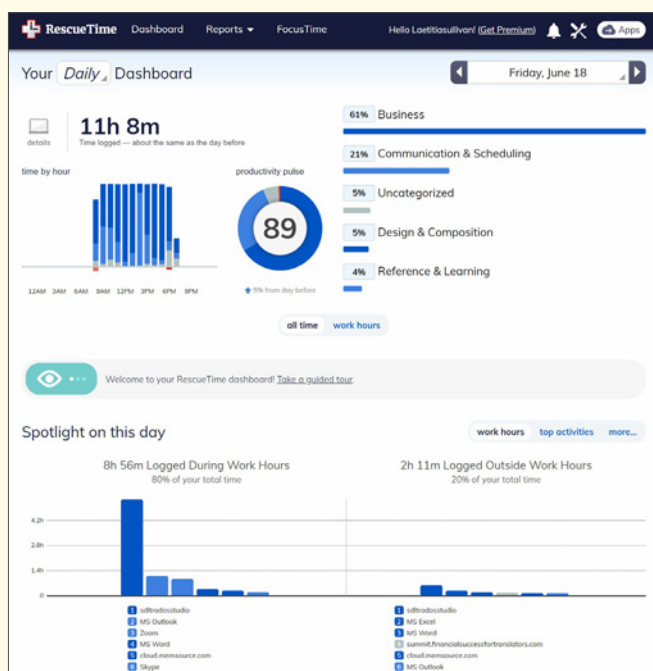
Time tracking: RescueTime Lite

If you are a bit reluctant (read: lazy) about time tracking or can't be bothered with starting and stopping a timer, RescueTime Lite is the perfect intuitive time-tracking tool for you. After installing, the app runs in your PC's background and tracks the programs and websites you spend your time on, the hours you are least/most productive, and your best/worst work days of the week. It logs this information in 15 different categories, which you can customise according to your type of work. Your time spent behind the screen is displayed in daily, weekly, monthly and even yearly dashboard format, showing exactly how long you were fidgeting in Microsoft Word, fiddling with emails or faffing about on Facebook.

This app is great for editors who charge by the hour or need to provide time sheets to clients as part of invoicing requirements. Other editors will also benefit from its many time-tracking features, eg logging those CPD hours or even just becoming more aware of how productive you *truly* are.
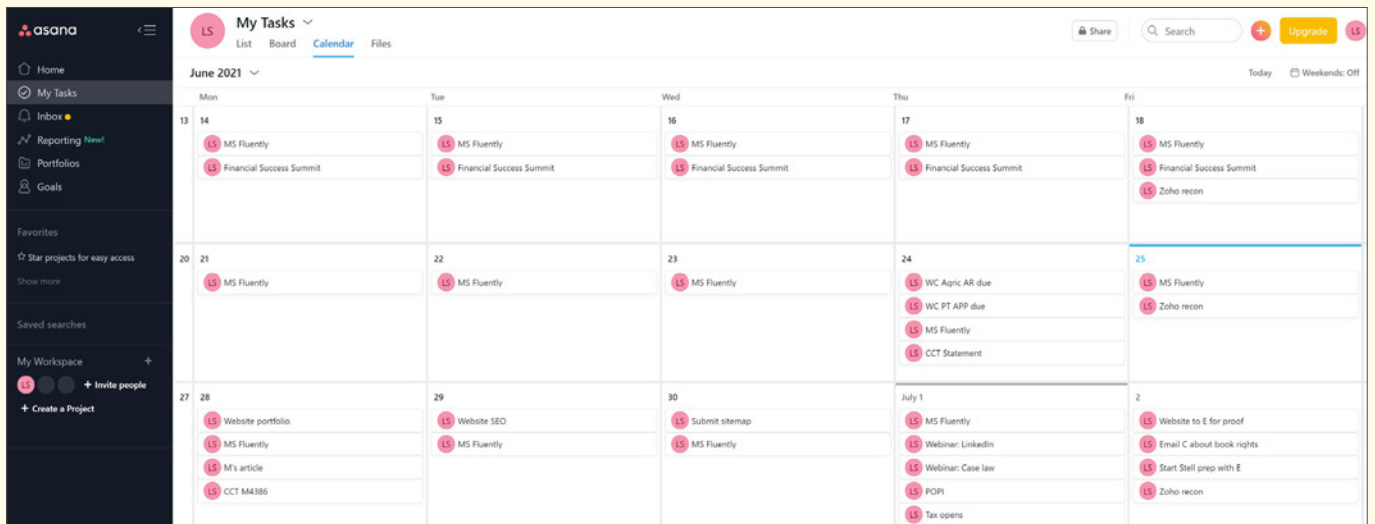
Other free time-tracking tools to try: toggl track, TimeCamp, Clockify. ❯

RescueTime to the rescue

Stay focused with Forest

Juggle editing projects in Asana

Fighting procrastination: Forest

Time tracking and focused time go hand in hand, but sometimes the procrastination devil is stuck to your shoulder. What to do? Use a specific app such as Forest to take away all distractions for at least 30 minutes, so you can hunker down and just get that 300-page edit done! This app can be downloaded on your phone or used on your PC as a Google Chrome extension. What makes it fun to use is that you are literally 'planting' a forest while staying focused on your work, because you can exchange your virtual coins earned for real trees to be planted around the world by an organisation called Trees for the Future. On the flip side, you turn into a 'tree murderer' when the distraction devil gets the better of you.

This type of app works well when you are trying to fight an Internet addiction or have trouble focusing on one task at a time because you just *have* to watch one more cat video.

Other free anti-procrastination tools to try: StayFocusd, Freedom, Cold Turkey.
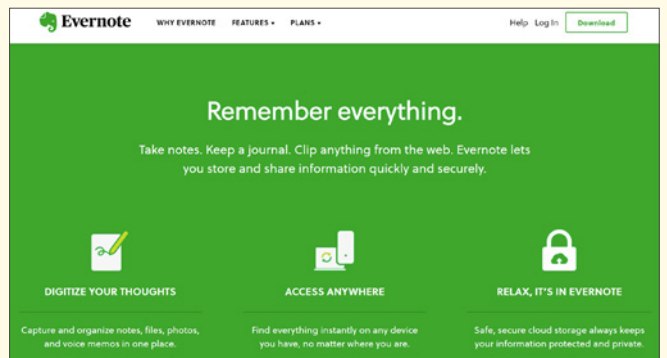

Scheduling: Asana

Once you have a grip on where your time is going (or being wasted!), it's a good idea to find a tool that makes scheduling or planning ahead easy, especially when you need to juggle several projects. Asana, available in your browser or for download on your phone, is one such scheduling or project-management tool where you can set up projects and divide them into different tasks to make sure you stay on top of things. All tasks are presented in list or calendar view, or in a Kanban-style board view. In the free version, up to 15 people can join your project and add attachments to your tasks – eliminating the need for shuffling around large jobs via email.

This app will suit editors who work as part of a team and need to follow certain workflows, such as for an editorial calendar or managing editors who need to keep track of all the moving parts of a publishing project.

Other free scheduling tools to try: Todoist, Trello, Remember the Milk.

Digitise your thoughts in Evernote

Note-taking: Evernote

If full-on project management is beyond your needs and you are looking for something simpler to keep all your notes and ideas together, a note-taking app might do the trick. Evernote functions as a digital scrapbook to save and organise all your thoughts, notes, images, documents, emails, audio notes, freehand sketches and, my personal favourite, webpage clippings. Another powerful feature is the app's ability to make all text in images searchable, even handwriting or scans – perfect for a haphazard note-taker like me.

The search function means I don't have to put too much effort into organising my random clippings, images and notes.

Editors who find value in writing thoughts down the minute they occur will love this app. It can also help those of us suffering from 'shiny object syndrome' to dump all those new ideas, trends and goals in one place before they take over the mind.

**Other free note-taking tools to try:** Microsoft OneNote, Google Keep, Simplenote. ❯
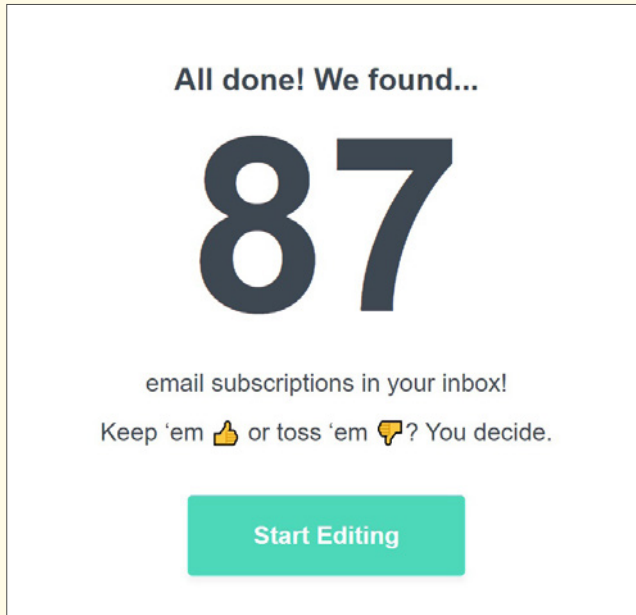
Get a grip on email with Unroll.me and Boomerang

Email management: Unroll.me and Boomerang

We all receive way too much email, and studies show that the average office worker spends almost a third of their day just reading emails. To help manage this deluge, Unroll.me bundles all your favourite email newsletters in a once-daily digest called 'The Rollup', so you can open and read them when you feel like it instead of letting them clutter up your inbox. You can also use the handy unsubscribe option to opt out of those newsletters you no longer want to receive.

If an avalanche of client email is your problem rather than newsletters, Boomerang might be just the thing. It's a dedicated email-management app for Gmail to schedule and set email reminders. The handy Send Later button will schedule your email to be sent automatically at a time of your choosing. If you are an
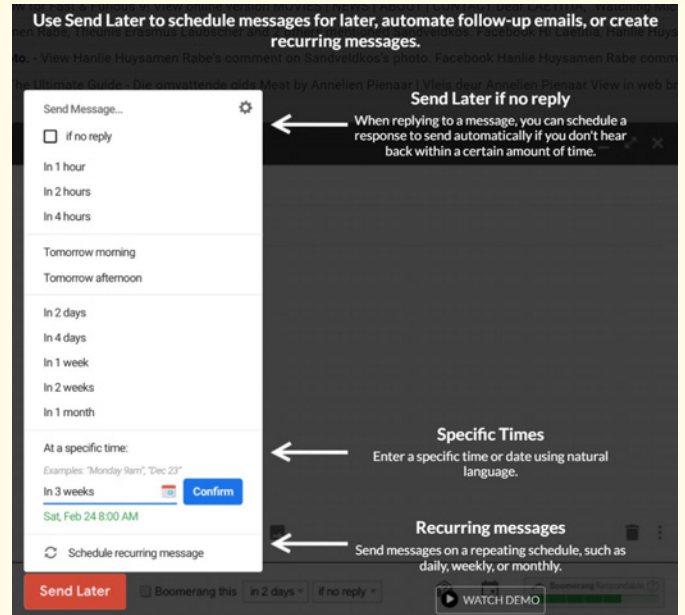
'inbox zero' disciple, the app also allows you to 'boomerang' an email back to your inbox (much like the built-in Snooze function in Gmail), so you can deal with it when you are ready, or when you want to follow up on client emails and invoices.

Other free email management tools to try: Right Inbox, Mixmax, SalesHandy.

The machines are coming!

To truly appreciate the beauty of productivity tools and what AI can do for you as an editor, there is a whole new world of automation apps out there, such as IFTTT (If This, Then That) and Zapier. These apps let you set up sequences or 'applets' ranging from the useful, such as 'Send a weekly digest of your Zoom meetings' and 'Send an automated response to a new client and add their details to a Google Sheet', to the unusual, such as 'Get yourself out of an awkward situation', which triggers a phone call so you can avoid speaking to that person you *really* don't want to talk to. The customisation is endless!

Be brave and download some of the tools in this article to see if they make a difference to your productivity as an editor. But if you feel it's too much like cracking a nut with a sledgehammer, you know you can always trust good ol' pen and paper to never let you down.

Part 2 of this article will be published in a future *PEGboard*.

References

Coulson, A 2020 *What's e-new? 21 for 2021.* https://blog.ciep.uk/whats-e-new-2021

Kashyap, V n.d. *44 productivity tools that will make your life much easier.* https://www.proofhub.com/articles/best-productivity-tools

MacKay, J 2020 *How to be more productive at work: 21 productivity tips, hacks, and tools to help you get more done in 2020.* https://blog.rescuetime.com/productivity-in-the-workplace/

Martelli, A 2014 *21 free tools and utilities for translators.* MTM Translations.

Saffrey, A 2020 *How can I be more productive? Part 1.* https://blog.ciep.uk/productivity-tools-1/

Saffrey, A 2021 *How can I be more productive? Part 2.* https://blog.ciep.uk/productivity-tools-2/

Whitty, T 2018 *Favorite productivity and organization tools for translators.* https://marketingtipsfortranslators.com/tools

Zetzsche, J 2020 *The translator's tool box: A computer primer for translators.* International Writers' Group.

Who's your colleague anyway?
Menitza Botha

Menitza Botha is one of our younger members and a recently Accredited Text Editor. She holds two degrees in language practice from the North-West University and currently lectures there. She also works as a freelance language practitioner and is a PEG mentor. In addition, she is an avid reader of genre fiction and literary fiction.

PEGboard (PB): Were you always drawn to the language profession? If not, how did you end up working as a language practitioner?
Menitza Botha (MB): I was definitely drawn to the language profession. I always knew that I wanted to do something with languages. All the way through my school years, my classmates would bring me their essays to edit – and I was stupid enough to do it for free, because I liked it! Then, when I was in Grade 11 or 12, posters for careers appeared all over the school's walls in the wake of the Vanderbijlpark Campus of the North-West University's open day. One of these posters advertised the possibility of becoming a 'language practitioner'. Needless to say, I was intrigued, so I went to find out more. As it turned out, language practice was primarily geared towards training editors and translators. I knew without a doubt that this was something I wanted to do, so I enrolled for a bachelor's degree in Language Practice and Communication with English and Afrikaans as additional majors, which I completed with 33 distinctions. I then carried on and completed my honours in Language Practice, also with distinction. It was during my honours year that I completed an internship at the Centre for Translation and Professional Language Services (CTrans) at the North-West University. This is where I cut my teeth on academic editing and translation. In 2019, I started working as a freelance language practitioner.

I always knew that I wanted to do something with languages. All the way through my school years, my classmates would bring me their essays to edit – and I was stupid enough to do it for free, because I liked it!

PB: What are your areas of speciality?
MB: It will be no surprise if I say academic editing, in various fields, as that is how I got my foot in the door. I find academic editing rewarding in terms of what one is able to learn from working with texts, especially if the writer proposes an interesting argument. My curiosity to find out how this argument plays out often helps me to get through the longer texts, such as theses and dissertations.

I also do a good deal of Plain Language work, mainly on banking material. Plain Language is interesting because it can also be viewed as a form of intralingual translation. I can then activate the processes in my brain concerned with translation, which I find very stimulating. I recently did two courses in Plain Language hosted by the Plain Language Association: the first concerned writing clear, Plain Language content for online platforms; and the second entailed Plain Language in health communication. I found both these courses very rewarding.

PB: What's the best part of your job? What do you like least?
MB: Certainly, the best part of the job is the ability to constantly learn new things. I can't imagine a project where I don't look something up, whether to check if the author got it right or to understand a concept better in order to edit the material more responsibly. A close second in terms of enjoyment is the fact that I feel like I'm tidying up a document.

My least favourite part of this job is occasionally running into highly intolerant language snobs, coupled with the assumption that I am a language snob myself. I most emphatically am not. Language use in the wild is, well, wild. I don't think it is my place to criticise anyone's language or to correct anyone's grammar in my head. If it is necessary (in my context, this would typically be a situation like an examination, where the type of language you use influences your performance), I respectfully correct language use to ensure that it conforms with the norms of good communication, without being judgmental about it.

PB: How have you been affected by the pandemic and what changes did it have on your working day?
MB: The greatest change did not actually occur in the editing part of my job. The greatest change obviously came about when universities moved their instruction online. You really feel disjunct from the students. Despite trying your best, you never know if the way you set up the content really speaks to the students. You also don't know how well they will engage with the content without some pressure from your side.

A definite change for the worse as a result of the pandemic is the constant concern for vulnerable friends and family members, something I'm sure most people will relate to.

PB: You are one of the 12 PEG Accredited Text Editors (ATEs) – congratulations! How did you experience the accreditation process? Do you have any advice for members considering becoming ATEs?
MB: I thought we had a reasonable amount of time to complete the accreditation test – 48 hours, if I remember correctly. I did find the test somewhat challenging, but I think something would have been amiss if I hadn't. Overall, the whole process ran smoothly. What really helped me was attending almost all the of the webinars offered by PEG. I found John Linnegar's courses of great help. I would also suggest that members get hold of a copy of *New Hart's Rules* and refer to it often, even if you intuitively feel you know what to do. This helps you learn the rules a little more explicitly.

PB: If you could, what advice would you give to a younger version of yourself?
MB: Don't be so shy. Although, for me, that would be much easier said than done. This advice is as much for my current self as my past self, but I think I should put myself out there more. I should also communicate more with my peers. ❯

Menitza Botha

PB: **What tools of the trade or equipment can you not do without?**
MB: Besides the obvious like a fairly fast computer, Microsoft Word and the Internet, I would say *New Hart's Rules* is indispensable for anyone who works with British or South African English. Next would be access to a good dictionary. I use Oxford dictionaries, accessible though PEG. As an academic editor, I also regularly make use of reference guides. Then there is PerfectIt, which is very useful, especially for maintaining consistency throughout longer texts. And finally, coffee. Lots and lots of coffee.

*PB*: **As a language practitioner, what is your next goal or aim for the year ahead?**
MB: My usual goal is to learn as much as possible, so I have a few courses and workshops lined up for later in the year that I'm very excited about. Then, more broadly as a language practitioner, my next goal is to obtain translation accreditation from Afrikaans to English from SATI. I have already obtained accreditation for translation from English to Afrikaans. Now I would like to become accredited in the other direction.

PB: **Would you recommend PEG to other editors? What aspects of the organisation do you enjoy?**
MB: I would definitely recommend PEG. You really get great value for your membership fee. What I enjoy most must be all the training opportunities that PEG provides. I've attended five webinars so far this year and I have learnt something valuable during each of them. I also enjoy the sense of community that PEG offers, especially through the Chat Group. You know that there will be someone to help with almost any query.

PB: **What advice would you give to editors starting out in the profession, or what are the important lessons you have learned in your career?**
MB: I would say get *New Hart's Rules* and learn the rules. This is how you become good at what you do and the sooner you begin, the better. Anyone with an affinity for language has an intuitive sense of what is right and what isn't, but it's always better to know the actual rule. Next is to make sure you have a good editing
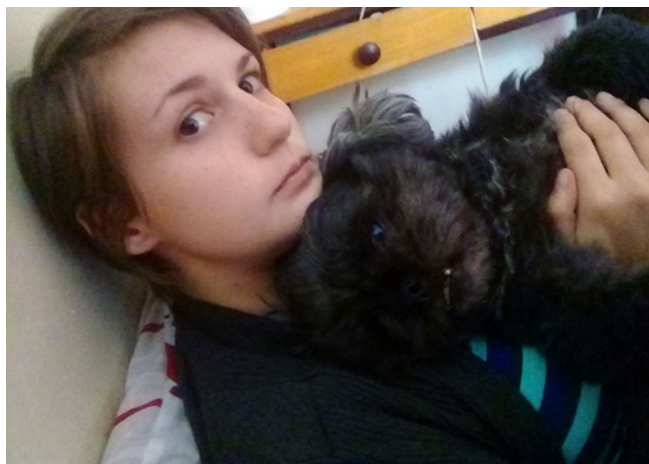
Menitza and Poffel

contract in place that sets out what you as an editor will and will not do. This can save you a lot of tears later on.

PB: **When you are not beavering away at your desk, what do you do to de-stress?**
MB: There are a few things: I go walking or cycling for about an hour every day with my partner. We are fortunate to live in an area where it is safe enough to do so. I find that it is good to sometimes get your body in step with the thoughts that are racing through your head. It is, of course, great to counteract all the sitting that comes with the job. We also like playing board games, which my partner almost always wins – he has a fiendishly tactical mind and I, sadly, do not.

#ToBlogOrNotToBlog

My webinar experience with Dr Claire Bacon

Anna Herrington

Dr Claire Bacon, a former research scientist, started her editing business in 2014. In 2017, she added blogging to her repertoire. Now she publishes a monthly blog to help her clients to write up their research. She made time to speak to a handful of PEG members about how we, too, could use blogging to promote our brand and grow our businesses.

I've often wondered if having a blog would help to promote my business and attract clients. I have started the process several times, but have always lost my nerve. My biggest obstacle, apart from a lack of confidence in my writing, was that I didn't think I had anything new to add to the information that is already available on the Internet. So, when PEG advertised the webinar on blogging, I signed up to find out more.

The webinar consisted of a 45-minute presentation, followed by a Q&A session. Claire approached the topic step by step and effectively removed the mystery surrounding blogging. After explaining the benefits of blogging, she spoke about knowing

our value, targeting our ideal clients, creating a blog, making the most of our articles by resharing them, posting snippets of the articles on social media platforms and creating new resources from our content.

Claire was very approachable, inspiring and thorough. Her presentation was full of helpful tips, prompts, examples, strategies and useful resources. She encouraged us to be brave, to put in the effort and to start an accountability group to edit and proofread one another's blogs.

'I learnt a lot from the webinar. Now, I'm putting it into practice …'

I learnt a lot from the webinar. Now, I'm putting it into practice by writing this article and, heart in throat, sending it to the newly formed PEG blogging accountability group for editing and proofreading.

Thank you, PEG, and thank you, Claire.